

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee February 7, 2025
Rough Draft

SANDERS: Good afternoon. We're going to go ahead and get started. Welcome to the Government, Military Veterans Affairs Committee. I am Senator Rita Sanders from Bellevue, representing District 45, and I serve as the chair of this committee. The committee will take up bills in order posted. This public hearing is your opportunity to be part of the legislative process and to express your position on the proposed legislation. Did you say you can't hear me? Please note that due to the number of testifiers, we will follow the standard guidelines of an annotated hearing. This is to ensure that everyone who wants to testify will have the opportunity to do so. Annotated hearing procedures will be followed by large-- will be followed for large attended public hearings. This all-- also can be decided by the chair at the beginning of the hearing for unexpected large crowds. Otherwise, prior notice will be on the printed hearing schedule. Individuals who will be testifying will be guaranteed three minutes to present their testimony. One hour of proponents, followed by one hour of opponents to testify, followed by, by some in the neutral. Then we cycle back through one hour of proponent, opponent, and neutral. Seating in the hearing room will be divided with proponents and opponents, on one side and the other. Seats here in the back are reserved for the neutral testimony. Sergeant at Arms will serve as ushers to indicate the next testifier. Overflow attendance to be seated in the overflow room and managed by the Sergeant at Arms. If there are testifiers waiting in the overflow room, we will take a break for an hour and allow those in the room to move forward to those seats that are available in this room. In the-- if the hearings-- if this hearing is to run long, we will take a 30-minute break at 5 p.m. If you are planning to testify today, please fill out the green testifier sheet that are on the table in the back of the room. Be sure to print clearly and fill it out completely. When it is your turn to come forward to testify, give the testifier sheet to the page or to the committee clerk. After you have testified, you will need to exit the room. If you do not wish to testify but would like to indicate your position on the bill, there are also yellow sign-in sheets at the back of the room on the table. These sheets will be included as an exhibit in the official hearing record. When you come up to testify, please speak clearly into the microphone. Tell us your name, and then spell both your first and last name to ensure we have an accurate record. We will begin the hearing today with the introducer's opening statements, followed by one hour of proponents, then one hour, one hour of opponents, and one hour in the neutral. We will finish with a closing statement by the introducer if they wish to give one. We will

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be using three-minute light system for all testifiers. When you begin your testimony, the light on the table will be green. When the yellow light comes on, you have one minute remaining. The red light indicates your time has ended. Questions from the committee, though, may follow. Also, committee members may come and go during the hearing. This has nothing to do with the importance of your testimony or the bill. It's just part of the process. Senators have other bills in other committee hearing rooms. A few final items to facilitate today's hearing. If you have any handouts or copies of your testimony, please bring 12 copies and give them to the page. If you do not have enough copies, the page will make sufficient copies for you. Please silence or turn off your cell phones. You may see committee members coming and going. You may see committee members using their electronic devices to access more information. Verbal outbursts or applause are not permitted in the hearing room. Such behavior may be cause for you to be asked to leave the hearing. Finally, committee procedures for all committees state that written position comments on a bill-- be included in the record must be submitted by 8 a.m. the day of the hearing. The only acceptable method of the submission is via legislative's website, legis-- nebraskalegislature.gov. Written position letters will be included the official hearing-- for the official hearing record, but only those testifying in person before the committee will be included on the committee statement. I will now have the committee members with us today introduce themselves, starting on my far right.

McKEON: Dan McKeon, District 41, Central Nebraska.

WORDEKEMPER: Dave Wordekemper, District 15, Dodge County, western Douglas County.

LONOWSKI: Dan Lonowski, District 33.

ANDERSEN: Bob Andersen, District 49, northwest Sarpy County in Omaha.

J. CAVANAUGH: John Cavanaugh, District 9, midtown Omaha.

GUERECA: Dunixi Guereca, downtown and south Omaha, LD 7.

HUNT: Megan Hunt, and I represent District 8 in the northern part of midtown Omaha.

SANDERS: Thank you. Senator Bob Andersen is the vice commander of this committee. Did I say commander? Vice Chair, thank you. Also assisting that committee today, to my left is legal counsel, Dick Clark, and to

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of similar age, body weight, training status, and talent, they can not replicate, replicate the performance of males. We do not only see this at the elite level, though. We observe this difference in male and female athletic ability, before-- from before puberty, all the way to the elite levels of athletics. Women athletes, both past and present, have made leaps and bounds to be able to compete in their respective sports. We have all heard of the several cases where a trans woman that is a male identifying as a female has competed in women's athletics and ruining the experience for the female competitors. It is abundantly clear that allowing biological males to compete in women's athletics is the exact opposite of what female athletics stands for. The female competitors deserve to compete against fellow females who have worked their whole life for the chance to show off their great talent, hard work, and God-given ability. Letting biological males strip these female athletes of that chance defeats the whole purpose for which female athletics stands for. LB89, the Stand With Women Act, should be accepted legislature [SIC] which affirms the scientific truth that males and females are biologically different. Females have earned their right to their own athletic competitions, bathrooms, locker rooms, prisons, and any other opportunity free from the intrusion of males. I hope you approve this bill. Thank you.

SANDERS: Thank you, Lysle Roe, for your testimony. Let's see if there are any questions from the committee. See none. Thank you. Thank you, again.

LYSLE ROE: Thank you, guys.

SANDERS: Hannah Holtmeier. Welcome.

HANNAH HOLTMEIER: Hi. Dear members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on Nebraska LB89, the Stand With Women Act, which I urge you to support. My name is Hannah Holtmeier, H-a-n-n-a-h H-o-l-t-m-e-i-e-r. I'm a senior here at the university, as well as an ambassador for Independent Women and a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma. In the fall of 2022, my sisters and I were forced into a situation I can confidently say none of us wanted to be in. Without our consent, we were forced to share a sorority house with an adult male. Since this horrible situation, we've been working to tell our story and help women in similar situations across the country. I believe that everyone deserves a safe space where they can relax and open up to others who understand them. For me, that space is my sorority house. For other girls, it's in a locker room or on the court with their team. When men start to infiltrate these spaces, women are exposed to

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and forced into uncomfortable situations. I imagine every one of you has a female or woman in your life which you care deeply about. Now imagine you get a call from that woman, saying she's just been forced to share her college housing or any intimate space with a fully-grown adult male, because that's the call my dad got back in 2022, one call he never imagined he'd be getting from me. We were just college girls who were promised a female-only sorority experience, and were suddenly forced to share our private space with a male. I share my experience, my experience today to qualify why it's so important for this committee to pass the Stand With Women Act. If passed into law, this bill will protect women's spaces and hard-earned rights by defining common sex, sex-based words like woman and female, which is already used in 149 Nebraska state statutes. This bill will safeguard female opportunities and private spaces from attack by those who seek to manipulate the definitions of words to achieve policies which lack public support. You must support this bill and stand with the over 900,000 women and girls in Nebraska. It's the right thing to do. Thanks.

SANDERS: Thank you, Hannah Holtmeier, for your testimony. Check to see if there are any questions from the committee. I see none. Thank you very much.

HANNAH HOLTMEIER: Thank you.

SANDERS: Next, we will have Amelia [SIC] Comiskey. Welcome.

AMALIE COMISKEY: Before I begin, I would like to thank the committee and everyone present today for giving me the opportunity to speak. My name is Amalie Comiskey, A-m-a-l-i-e C-o-m-i-s-k-e-y, and I'm a student at UNO, as well as high school lacrosse coach for women. I'm testifying today in support of the Stand With Women Act. This bill was created to help protect women and girls in sports, bathrooms, locker rooms, and is essential in upholding women's safety in Nebraska. During my high school years, I played lacrosse and can attest to the significant difference between males and females sports. During my junior year, my lacrosse team played against the men's team for a fundraising event. Due to the biological difference in muscularity and strength, I sustained severe injuries to my knee after a male charged into me. The incident not only proved the risk that men have in women's sports, but also significantly changed my life. I was taken out of the rest of my season and dealt with a year-long recovery of surgery and physical therapy. Those who try to normalize biological males in women's sports tell these girls and women to just deal with

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HUNT: So there's fewer injuries when women play against women and men play against men?

KAUTH: They're less significant, they're less impactful.

HUNT: OK. Would you-- you know, if a-- if two women are playing volleyball against each other, basketball, and an injury occurs, how do we determine that the person that caused the injury isn't trans?

KAUTH: Well, that's what the bill is about. It's making sure everybody on those teams is the same sex.

HUNT: Would that be a flag to you, that that person should be maybe double-checked, do the cheek swab, do the genital inspection, whatever is called for?

KAUTH: No. No, because if the bill's in place, they would not-- you wouldn't automatically assume if somebody is better, they're a boy. You would say, "Wow, they're better. That's impressive."

HUNT: So this would fix that?

KAUTH: That's what I would hope.

HUNT: OK. OK. Thank you.

SANDERS: Any other questions? Going once. We have, like, four minutes left.

KAUTH: I was just saying, we could take it to midnight, guys.

HUNT: No, we, we can go past midnight.

SANDERS: 11:59. Thank you, everyone. This closes the hearing on LB89.